

URGENT ACTION

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE SUSPECTED

The whereabouts of Randy Vizcaíno González have been unknown since he was supposedly detained by the police on 13 December 2013 in Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic. The National Human Rights Ombudsman called on the police to investigate his whereabouts on 2 March. He is at risk of enforced disappearance.

On 13 December around 11pm, **Randy Vizcaíno González** was driving home on a motorcycle on the Americas motorway in Santo Domingo accompanied by a friend and two of his children, aged five and six, when a police patrol car ordered him to stop. When he did not comply, the police officers allegedly shot twice without injuring anyone and requested support from the nearest police station. Once the police officers managed to stop the motorcycle, Randy Vizcaíno González ran away while his friend was beaten by the officers in front of the children.

The two children and the friend were subsequently brought to Los Frailes II police station in Santo Domingo Este where they saw Randy Vizcaíno González having already been detained and in custody. According to them, he was in bad condition, bearing visible signs of having been beaten. The head of the police station ordered an officer and the friend to escort the children back home. When the friend was later brought back to the police station he noticed that Randy Vizcaíno González was no longer there. Police officers told the friend that he had escaped.

The National Human Rights Ombudsman (Defensora del Pueblo) visited the police station to investigate the disappearance and on 2 March reported her doubts to the head of the National Police about the credibility of such an escape. She also reported that Randy Vizcaíno González's detention was not recorded by the police station although witnesses stated having seen him there. She called on the police to investigate his whereabouts. Randy Vizcaíno González's family told Amnesty International they have not heard from him since he was detained. He is at risk of being a victim of enforced disappearance.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to take immediate steps to establish the whereabouts of Randy Vizcaíno González, who was last seen in custody in Los Frailes II police station in Santo Domingo;
- If he is in custody, calling for his immediate release, or otherwise that he be charged with a recognizably criminal offence; and calling for him to be given immediate access to his family, a lawyer and any medical treatment he may require;
- Calling on the authorities to fully investigate the arbitrary detention of Randy Vizcaíno González and to bring those responsible to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 APRIL 2014 TO:

Chief of the Police

Mayor General Manuel E. Castro Castillo
Palacio de la Policía Nacional
Av. Leopoldo Navarro #402
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Fax: +1809 685 4510
Email: info@policianacional.gob.do
Salutation: Sr. Jefe de la Policía / Dear Chief of the Police

Public Prosecutor

Francisco Dominguez Brito
Palacio de Justicia
Av. Jiménez Moya esq. Juan Ventura
Simón
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Fax: +1809 532 2584
Email: info@pgr.gob.do
Salutation: Sr. Procurador General de la República / Dear Public Prosecutor

Minister of Interior and Police

José Ramón Fadul
Av. México esq. Leopoldo Navarro
Edificio de Oficinas Gubernamentales
Juan Pablo Duarte
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Fax: +1809 685 1194
Email: info@mip.gob.do
Salutation: Sr. Ministro / Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since 2009 Amnesty International has documented at least two cases of possible enforced disappearance by the police in the Dominican Republic: Juan Almonte Herrera and Gabriel Sandi Alistar on 28 September and 23 July 2009, respectively. Both were suspected of being involved in two different cases of kidnapping. The National Police deny having ever arrested Juan Almonte Herrera, despite witness testimonies to the contrary, whereas they acknowledge that Gabriel Sandi Alistar was arrested, but claim that he escaped from custody.

In addition, the families of Juan Almonte Herrera and Gabriel Sandi Alistar have said that they have been harassed and intimidated by police officers.

In October 2011 Amnesty International published the report *"Shut up if you don't want to be killed" Human rights violations by police in Dominican Republic* (AMR 27/002/2011 <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR27/002/2011/en>), which documented numerous cases of human rights violations committed every years by the police in the Dominican Republic, including unlawful killings, arbitrary arrests, torture and ill-treatment, and enforced disappearances. Amnesty International's investigation highlighted the lack of oversight on the National Police and the need for a substantive human rights based reform the police.

The current government has publicly expressed its concerns for the lack of public trust in the National Police and its willingness to reform the institution, and a draft of a new Organic Law of the National Police has been widely discussed in 2013 in Congress. The Congress is yet to vote on the latest version of the law which could positively contribute to the transformation towards a National Police which is more respectful of human rights and with greater accountability mechanisms.

Name: Randy Vizcaíno González

Gender m/f: m

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